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GRANDMOTHER'S DAYS.

BY MRS. M. W. BLACKER.

In our grandmothers' days, when a cabin rude,
Unfinished, and bare, held the little all
Of the pair who was building the household fire,
The light of it falling on window and wall,
Was there less of happiness then than now?

In our grandmothers' days, when the kettle swung
On the sooty crane in the chimney wide,
And the spitted fowl, that sputtered and sung,
Swung gently from side to side,
Was there less of happiness then than now?

In our grandmothers' days, when the broad stone hearth
Was the trysting place of the lovers dear,
And the high-backed settle reflected the glow
Of the firelight on faces suggestively near,
Was there less of happiness then than now?

In our grandmothers' days, when the children came,
And the humble home was filled with glee,
As, clothed in their garb of homespun, they roamed
And frolicked like birds and butterflies free,
Was there less of happiness then than now?

In our grandmothers' days when the cradle stood
In sound of the burring, whirring wheel,
And the baby crooned and clapped his hands
At each click of the swiftly revolving reel,
Was there less of happiness then than now?

In our grandmothers' days, when trouble came,
And sometimes even the wolf, to the door,
The home was their castle and love lent it grace,
And if ofttimes the battle of life was full sore,
Was there less of happiness then than now?

—*Good Housekeeping.*

THE SOUL OF THE CAT.

Yee Sam Ling was a lonely one. He had friends, of course, in plenty, and relatives, too, for that matter, whom he saw every day of his life right on the Mott street pavements. But Ling had his own views on matrimony and he didn't believe anybody could be happy without a wife. It was strange why he should have suddenly taken on that belief, for hadn't he lived fifteen years away from his own flowery land? Of course he had.

He first came to the Golden Hills and went to work in the mines, but he couldn't stand it, for he used to feel the strange white devils at night punching him in the back. That was because he wasn't strong enough to do his share of the work. So he gave his claim in the Golden Hills to a relative and traveled across the continent to New York, curled up like a mink on a seat of the smoking car.

He was idle for awhile, and then he started in to sell soap to the laundrymen, until he finally got enough of the American man's cash to rent a store. He put out his red sign, with the fluttering red streamers on it to keep the evil ones away, and he became a merchant. That was a long while ago, when he came to look back over it. Every night for years he had crawled into his little bunk, curtained off at the back of the store, and after comforting himself with the opium he loved so well, he had fallen asleep, to dream of pretty Chinese girls tottering on pink clouds across the water and stretching their arms out to him.

He often thought of China and the home life there, and he used to count the money in his trunk and wonder when he would have enough to go back and buy a koon-foo's rank and wear a cap with the red button of the third degree. Then, he thought, he would buy with some of his money the prettiest girl in the province, and she would have feet so small that she couldn't walk at all unless she had a strong servant holding each hand.

He often played the lottery in the hope that he would win, and he burned prayer-sticks before his kat god that he might have luck, but he might just as well have saved the sticks, for luck never came. So persistently did he lose that more than once he was tempted to let one of the burning prayer-sticks fall over against the god and burn it, but he was afraid lest his deceit should be discovered and the god seek a just revenge.

One day there came into his store a white girl who lived on the top floor of the tenement around the corner. She had hair like the wongahik gold he used to dig out of the Golden Hills.

"Say, John," she said, "me mother's run out o' soap, an' she's up to her neck in washin'. Gimme a bar."

Ling was smitten with a great love. He remembered having seen this girl go past his store many times, but he never had such a chance as this to speak to her.

"You mommee want sope?" he asked. "She washee?"

"Yes; I want er bar, an' I want it quick."

"Alle lite," said Ling, and he clattered behind the narrow counter and pulled out from a shelf two bars of soap.

"You takkee two," he said. "No n'gant'sin, you takkee; you sabe?" and he pushed the soap and the five pennies she had laid down away from him. Then he went on: "I lakkee you; you heap nice. Lat you name?"

"Gee, what graft," said the girl. "So I get the sope fur nuttin, do I, John? Well, me name's Maggie Sullivan, if yer wanter know."

Ling looked at her with admiring eyes. Then he pointed to the soap and pennies and said, simply:

"You takkee. I heap lakkee you, sabe? You clum 'glain?"

"Yes, I sabe, John," said the girl, "and I'll come again."

So she went out, and Ling went to the door and looked after her until she had disappeared around the corner. Then he went back behind the narrow counter and sat down on a stool. He rested his elbows on a pile of paper, sunk his chin in his hands and thought very hard. His thinking amounted to something, for he went to the little cubby room curtained off at the back of the store, and out of the big camphor wood chest he pulled some carefully folded clothes. He was a new man when he came out into the store again, and a couple of his countrymen, who had dropped in to have a friendly chat and a smoke, began to chaff him.

His old cloth blouse, with the shiny place on the back where his well-oiled cue had hung, lay in a heap on the floor with his old pow-tai and coarse trousers. Instead he wore clothes of brocaded dark blue silk, and his sandals were like those of a koon-foo. He was not good company to his friends, so they did not stay long, and when they had gone he stood in the doorway and watched. A cold wind was blowing up the street. It made him shiver, but he stood his ground and watched for the coming of Maggie Sullivan.

Every day for a week he watched, until on the eighth day he saw her running by with a shawl over her head and a pitcher in her hand.

"Hi'lo," he cried. "Hi'lo, Maggie S'l'm'n, you com' ni-chue?"

"Hello, John; how's things? I'll see yer when I get th' old man's beer," and she dashed on, while Ling went in and waited.

After a while she came in with a rush.

"You lakkee China candy," began Ling, before she could say anything. "Heap good," and he shoved her a queer little box full of keung toward her. "I lakkee you," he continued, while he picked at the guilt buttons on his blouse. "I bling you nice cl'ose, heap nice, you sabe? Makkee you nice cl'ose, you dless heap nice, sabe? You mally me, you hab heap money."

"Marry you, John? Well, I guess not. Me old woman would pull the pig-tail out of your head if she heard you makin' any breaks like that."

"You mally me bimeby," said Ling, as though he felt sure he would win.

"So long, John," she said, as she went out munching the candy. That was the first of the queer courtship. It struck Maggie seriously, and she thought she might do worse. "I don't know but what I'll marry the Chink," she said to herself. "I'll get all ther clothes an' money I want, an' I'll be the boss, you can bet."

There was a cat which used to sleep under Ling's counter. She grew fat on the scraps of chow-chop-suey and chueyunk which fell from the table, and altogether lived a life of peace. But the day Ling proposed to Maggie Sullivan the cat's manner changed. Instead of sleeping under the counter half the day she took to walking on the counter, mewing uneasily in a wailing voice, which filled the room with a distressful sound.

Then she would pause in her walk, and, sitting on her haunches, glare at Ling with staring eyes. Once or twice he drove her away, but she came back and glared until her eyes turned from green to purple. Once he struck her with his bamboo t'uung, and she retreated to a high shelf and watched him.

"The evil one possessed her," said Ling and he burned more prayer sticks before his kashat Josh, but the walking of the cat never ceased. She crept under Ling's bed that night and scratched at the matting on the floor; she paraded the little room, and her big, shining eyes seemed to light up the dark place. From that night the cat was never at rest, and Ling became so stricken with a silent terror that he would go out into the street rather than cross her path.

He forgot about the cat a couple of days later, when Maggie Sullivan came in. She was better dressed than usual.

"Hello, John," she began, "I had a row with the old woman, and I've clim out. I'm dead sick of gittin' jumped on. Now, if you want'er marry me on ther square I'm with you, but I don't want any funny business in mine."

"You mally me?" asked Ling, while a smile crept over his face. "Allee lite, I mally you."

"But I'll tell you, John," the girl went on, "you've got to cut that pig-tail off and wear citizen's clothes. You got to be pretty near a white man. You got to be as white as clothes kin make you, an' you got to treat me white, too, or I'll shake you."

Ling didn't want to lose his cue, and he fought against what he considered a sacrilege, but he found Maggie relentless.

"I curl him up, so," he said, as he twisted it about his head, "'n I puttee on hlat, so," and he pulled an old slouch hat down over his head, "'n noblody slee hlim, ha!"

No, even that wouldn't do, and Maggie went away saying: "I'm goin' up to a lady friend's o' mine ter stay ter nite, John, an' I'll see you to-morrer, an' if ther pig-tail don't go I don't git married, see?"

Ling didn't quite see, but he thought a lot. He thought Maggie was the prettiest girl he had ever seen. There was nothing ch'an about her. She had fine blue eyes, a trim figure and a shock of golden hair that attracted the Chinaman. The old cat jumped on the counter and howled and stared at him, and he went out to get away from those green eyes. He went to the Joss house and burned thirty cents worth of prayer sticks and paper. He made up his mind quickly after that, and almost ran down the dark, creaking steps and across the way to where the tal'-tou'-lo lived and did business.

"Take off this thing," he said when he sat down on the stool in front of the little razors and scissors.

"What," said the barber, "are you crazy, or have the foreign devils got you, too?"

"Cut it off, I tell you. Are you not here to do such work as this?"

"No, that is wrong. I know your mother. What would she say if I did it? Her curses would come to me as well as to you, unworthy son."

Ling ran out while his courage lasted. He went to a Kwang-tung man who lived near Pell street and had no cue.

"Cut this thing off," he said. He did not need to beg this time.

"Ha, ha," laughed the Kwang-tung man, "you are going to be one of us, good," and he picked up a big pair of shears. Snip, and Ling's cue was gone, cut close to his head. Out Ling ran, leaving his cue behind him. He went into his store and sat down to think, when up jumped the cat. Her eyes were yellow this time and she howled mournfully.

"Get away, you evil thing," and he pushed her off with a stick. He did not sleep that night. He dreamed strange things and saw strange sights; he thought of his home in far-off China, and of his mother and the little Chinese maidens whom he had known before he came to the new country. He smoked and saw faces in the clouds. In the morning his eyes were heavy and red with opium, and he let his hired man do all the work. He lay in his cubby bunk and smoked the opium until he heard a voice. It sounded as if it came from a great distance. It said:

"Hello, where's the boss? In the back room? All right."

The curtains were pulled back and Maggie Sullivan came in.

"Hittin' ther pipe, eh? Well, that's bad for their blood. How's yer pig-tail?"

"I cut hlim. He's glone," said Ling, half stupidly.

"That's good. I knew you'd come around. The Chinks allers do. Git up if yer agoin' ter git married."

Ling had a vague idea that he was very happy. The opium had brought a peaceful feeling, but he was rather stupid. Maggie sat on the edge of the bunk and the cat walked across the room with stately tread, glaring at her. She paused at her feet and in one bound was in her lap.

"Hello, pussy," she said, putting her face down and stroking the fur. Like a flash a paw shot out, and five-hooked, sharp claws were unsheathed and dragged across the girl's cheek. She gave a frightened scream, and when Ling looked he saw three red lines down her face, from which blood was dripping. And the cat walked slowly across the floor with the same stately tread.

"I've got a nice looking face now," said Maggie, "and I think I'll have that cat killed."

"Less," said Ling, "kill him," and he arose dreamily and tried to drive the cat out, but she wouldn't go. He gave it up and cursed the spirit which possessed the cat.

"Some enemy of mine has died," he thought, "and his soul has gone into the cat."

Maggie washed the blood from her face and put on three long strips of plaster, and then they went around to the Five Points Mission, where they were married. The minister, Mr. Boughton, asked them both a great many questions, and satisfied himself that everything was all right. Before he dismissed them he said he hoped Maggie would be happy. "I hope so, sir," said she, "an' they say the Chinks are good to their wimmin." They went back to the store then. There was a letter on the counter near the scales. It had come from China, and was for Yee Sam Ling. The cat sat near it and would not move. Ling pushed her away with a stick, but she came back. He was afraid to put his hand out for the letter, so he pulled it toward him with his pipe. It was from his native town.

"Your good mother is dead," it said; "the scourge devil carried her away. It was her will that you return and marry the girl she has betrothed to you."

The letter fell from Ling's hands; he looked up and saw the cat still staring at him.

"My mother's soul is there to curse me," he whispered to himself, backing toward the door. "It is she. She has come across the big water because I did not return," and he kept stepping backward.

"The curse has come upon me!" And he felt for his queue. Then he looked at Maggie and saw the marks of the claws. With a shriek he opened the door and rushed out.

"John's gone plumb crazy," said Maggie to the attendant. "It's the opium, I guess. It knocks 'em all when they get the habit."

Ling never came back, so Maggie patched a truce with her mother and went back to the tenement. Nobody but the minister knows she is Mrs. Yee Sam Ling, and the new sign which swing over the door of the little store tells every one who looks up at it that Sun Quong sells Chinese groceries there.

Sun Quong was the attendant.—*New York Evening Sun.*

He Made Honest Men Help Him Rob.

Henry B. Miller, one of the most daring robbers in the West since the famous Black Bart, rested at the city prison in San Francisco the other night with Sheriff Paul of Arizona, who is taking his prisoner to San Quentin to serve a ten-year sentence for highway robbery. The robbery itself had several novel features. About three and a half years ago Miller planned to rob the stage running between Florence and Casa Grande, A. T. While waiting for the stage Dr. Hurley, of Florence, and his coachman, drove along the road and were halted by Miller. The highwayman robbed the doctor and his man of $52, and then compelled them to assist him in holding up the stage. After driving their team into the brush he tied their hands behind them, put masks on their faces and ordered them to stand in the brush by the side of the road. While they were in this position a man named Saix drove up, and after he had contributed $200 to swell Dr. Hurley's contribution was treated in the same manner as the other two. When the stage arrived Miller stood out in the road and ordered the driver to stop. The driver did so, and, without waiting to be told, threw out the mail pouch and express box and started on his way. Miller released his unwilling assistants and sent them after the stage. They reported at once to Florence, and a posse went out and captured Miller.—*Chicago Herald.*

The fact that there are two hemispheres goes to demonstrate that the shape of the earth is spherical.

ROME. OLD AND NEW.

The Eternal City Can Never Again Be the Home of Art.

That phase of Rome is gone forever—gone as surely as the simplicity and stern morality of the Republic, the splendor of the Empire, or the moral authority of the papal rule. Rome can no more be the home of art again than it can be the seat of universal empire or the patrimony of St. Peter, says W. J. Stillman in the July *Atlantic*. What has come is not so clear. The Romans of to-day have none of the distinctive virtues of either preceding epoch, except military courage, which the Italians have never lacked, though they have not always been fortunate in the employment of it. Taste was never a characteristic of Rome at any age, but in the great days the Romans built well. This cannot be said now, and all that is most modern is most execrable; all that is oldest is most execrated and profaned. The new barbarians who, in the present dispensation, swoop down from cisalpine Gaul, reared in the civic ideals of Genoa and Turin, have no sympathy with the monumental records of Rome, and no conception of anything to replace them. The Rome of 1870 was dirty, but dignified; inconvenient for people of modern tastes, but most comfortable for those who had adapted themselves to its mediæval ways. The Rome of 1890 is comfortable for nobody; the acres of new palaces that were to be are mainly huge, ugly tenement houses, stuccoed flimsies, abhorrent without and inhospitable within,—a tasteless waste, where the highest virtue is fragility, and the noblest destiny, demolition. Of the delightful gardens which used to exist within the circuit of the walls of Aurelianus, the only considerable fragment remaining is that of the English embassy; and that, too, had been marked out in building lots, and had been saved by the protest of Her Majesty's Government, backed by the *Times* and the Italian archæological authorities. The famous Ludovisi gardens, the pride of papal Rome, and among the most beautiful in Europe, have been built over, and the vengeful lover of old Rome sees with a malignant satisfaction the long rows of untenanted windows of the huge apartment houses of the quarter, over whose portals, newest in stucco and whitewash, he reads the last remnant of the language of the Romans, "Est locanda." The Ludovisi gardens were offered to the municipality for $600,000, and refused, while it spent $740,000 in the purchase and demolition of a single palace on the Corso, to make a vacant space less than the hundredth part of the gardens. The transformation of Rome during the last twenty years is unique in the history of civilization for barbarism, extravagance, and corruption; never since the world began was so much money spent to do so much evil.

But Rome survives it, as it has survived the wrecking of the Goths, the Vandals, the Constable de Bourbon; survives even the Barbari and the Barberini. The Campagna still undulates into distance, if somewhat encroached on near the walls, and the arches of the Glaudian aqueduct still measure off the space with their gigantic stride; the Appian way is not made a modern cemetery, and there is left material for the artist who has the courage to return; Aricia, Nemi, Tivoli, and the far-off Olevano remains unchanged. The papal city has been comparatively unchanged by the expropriation except along the Tiber, and nobody need go to the new quarter who does not choose so to do. Life is dear, too dear for the cosmopolitan artist folk, who used to make one of the principal attractions of the city to Westerners, and with very few notable exceptions they are succeeded by modern Italians, of whose art little is to be said. There is old Giovanni Costa, like Titian, outliving the school of poetic landscape and generously teaching its traditions to such as will learn them; the Academy of France is still presided over by the veteran Herbert, the last of the school of healthy religious thought in painting—that to which services were not enough; and who were more troubled as to what they should paint than how they should paint it; but neither the one nor the other has much influence on the younger men. There is still the cafe Greco where it was in the day of Salvator Rosa, but men go to it only as to a reliquary to see the place where once all the artists of Rome used to meet along with poets and the minor breed of the muses, and it is hardly known to the general visitor. Details disappear and the eternal city looms above them like Mount Blanc over the little intervening hills when seen from a distance, or like St. Peter's from the Campagna, and will do so when the present system is in ruins and ivy grows over the new quarter. All these crudities will disappear; this pinchbeck in Paris is only another allusion which time will dissipate and Rome will be again what it has been from its republican days, even though the new republic comes and the papacy departs, a center of attraction to a spiritual cosmopolitan population, never a center of trade or business; and the people who know it are not those who are born in it, but those who are born to it and its liberties of thought.

Victoria's Joke on the Grand Old Man.

Every year when autumn approaches Queen Victoria has her trunks packed and goes on a pilgrimage to the shrine of the late John Brown at Balmoral. The quiet life which her Majesty is generally leading becomes then absolutely dull, and greatly exasperates her suite, says the New York *World*. From the windows of her royal apartments the Queen can glance at the white marble monument on dear John's tomb, and all her time is devoted either to the memory of the "ever lamented" or the faithful servant who managed to crawl up to such a high place in her royal affections. Once in a while, however, the dullest of all the crowned heads in Europe feels dull herself. Last year the parson of Balmoral, who is a daily guest at the royal table, seeing her Majesty so bored, and knowing her weakness for everything Scotch, spoke to her of one of her tenants' daughters, who could dance the reel better than any girl in Scotland.

The young lady was ordered to appear before her Majesty the following day. When ushered into the Queen's presence her Majesty said:

"I hear you can dance the reel well. Dance."

There was nothing left for the young lady to do but to dance; and she did it so gracefully that her Majesty's severe face almost took on a pleasant expression.

After the performance was over she asked the girl if the Queen could do anything for her.

The young lady first hesitated, but suddenly replied:

"Indeed, your Majesty, you can."

"What is it?"

"Give me Mr. Gladstone's head on a charger."

Casting a severe glance at the girl the Queen turned round and said:

"Dear child, I will willingly give you the charger, but Mr. Gladstone's head I can not. It is a long time ago he lost it."

Immoral Fiction.

The newspaper press, as a censor of morals, must attack and expose crimes. The true journalist only represents their most forbidden phases. He never makes them attractive. It is to be regretted that any persons, save the officials of the police courts, are forced to know anything about crimes, but it is impossible to conceal the moral diseases of the body politic, just as it is impossible to conceal the moral ailments that attack the physical man. The journalist is the moral hygienist. His function is to discover the evil and bring it to public attention, so that it may be duly treated. We repeat that the immoral fiction poured out upon the country is vastly more depraving than are the reportorial narrations made in the respectable newspapers of the country. The evil has suddenly seized upon society. What are the good people, the heads of families, the teachers of youth, the protectors of the purity and honor of the family circle going to do about it?—*New Orleans Picayune.*

Custer's Last Sword.

The sword which Custer used in his campaign against the Indians, and which he lost with his life at the battle of the Little Big Horn, is now in the possession of a Chicago man. Its battered blade is as flexible as whalebone, and it looks as though it had been through many a hand to hand encounter. It is covered with innumerable designs of drums, flags, cannons and other implements of warfare.—*Indianapolis Journal.*

It frequently happens that those who are most ingenious in devising plans of economy for others are themselves extremely extravagant.